

2012

Review of Christopher J. Lucas and John W. Murry, Jr.'s New Faculty: A Practical Guide for Academic Beginners

Jacob Glover

Fort Hays State University, jiglover@fhsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholars.fhsu.edu/ts>

Recommended Citation

Glover, Jacob (2012) "Review of Christopher J. Lucas and John W. Murry, Jr.'s New Faculty: A Practical Guide for Academic Beginners," *Teacher-Scholar: The Journal of the State Comprehensive University*: Vol. 4, Article 8.
Available at: <http://scholars.fhsu.edu/ts/vol4/iss1/8>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by FHSU Scholars Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Teacher-Scholar: The Journal of the State Comprehensive University by an authorized administrator of FHSU Scholars Repository.

Christopher J. Lucas and John W. Murry, Jr. *New Faculty: A Practical Guide For Academic Beginners*. Third Ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 293 p. ISBN 9780230114869. \$25.

Lucas and Murry's third edition of their primer, *New Faculty: A Practical Guide for Academic Beginners*, covers what are arguably the most important concerns for a new faculty member: teaching, publishing, advising, service, grant writing, and legal issues of the professoriate. The depth and academic rigor applied to issues common to new faculty such as institutional culture or mentoring will be appreciated and useful in the first year of academic life. Not much has been changed from the original edition published in 2002. The major sections are the same and any given page is largely identical as well. As in previous editions, the authors have compiled an extensive bibliography, bringing together the work of numerous experts in faculty career development, such as Boice, Boyer, Gamson, McKeachie, Menges, and Nilson. Yet, with a few exceptions in the grant writing and legal issues chapters, the vast majority of references pre-date the original edition. The two strongest chapters, in terms of their practical use, are the ones devoted to teaching and learning. These chapters are designed to help new faculty survive the first few weeks of teaching, navigate the final weeks of the second semester, as well as plan individual courses and participate in departmental and program level curriculum design.

Responding to the common criticism that faculty teach as they have been taught and have received little pedagogical training, Lucas and Murray include numerous practical suggestions to help faculty overcome that natural bias and dig deeper into the teacher-learner dynamic. Yet, within the wealth of books focused on new faculty, the third edition of *New Faculty* could do more to bring the content into the twenty-first century. For example, for the amount of attention given to active learning the presentation of learning science falls predominantly on the side of conventional wisdom (which is increasingly being disproven). There is no mention of teaching and learning in the age of social media and mobile technology, a topic relevant to teaching, learning, use of faculty time, and their legal ramifications as well. Likewise, scant attention is paid to online teaching and learning, which is increasingly a common fact of faculty life. Omission of these topics is myopic at best and betrays the original 2002 edition. Even faculty at the most traditional institution will need help acclimating to online learning, mobile technology, and social media brought to class by students, saying nothing of needing help infusing these into the teaching and learning dynamic. While Lucas and Murry acknowledge the omission of attention to part-time and adjunct faculty, they also omit

recognition of the changing demographics of the professoriate. Emily Lenning, Sara Brightman, and Susan Caringella's *A Guide to Surviving a Career in Academia: Navigating the Rites of Passage* (Routledge, 2010) and Rachel Connelly and Kristen Ghodsee's *Professor Mommy: Finding Work-Family Balance in Academia* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2011), for instance, open up the field to feminist perspectives, recognizing the challenges faced by female faculty.

While *New Faculty* may better reflect traditional Research 1 institutions, with their particular dynamic of teaching, scholarship, and service, new faculty of most state comprehensive universities will also find the work useful in setting of context and introducing important aspects of life in academe, particularly for those institutions with no orientation or insufficient programming typically housed in a solid teaching and learning center. Given its limitations, *New Faculty* could still prove a useful and readable companion to most new faculty across all institutional types.

Jacob Glover
Fort Hays State University